121 the stream, the cattle shed, and the hearth. Furthermore, the participants in
796 this ceremony do all they can to insure that they are in a state of purity, and that they do nothing to cause a mishap during this particular day.

Let us now examine these points in more detail. The requirements of
783 ritual purity and bodily cleanliness are a *sine qua non* for the performance of any ceremony. If a man does not approach the gods with the knowledge that he has done all that he can to be in a pure state, he has little hope that
175 his prayers will be answered. In pre-British days, when the salt had to be
437 purchased in the plains below, it received special treatment from the mo-
439 ment of purchase onward to insure that it would not become polluted
439 before the ceremony. The men who were to carry the salt up the mountain
783 slopes were not to carry anything else; contact with ordinary foodstuffs would pollute this particular salt. The annual trading expeditions were normally timed so as to fall a few weeks before the salt-giving ceremony. Nowadays a Badaga simply buys his own salt in the town market and brings it home without special ritual precautions.

High in the roof of each cattle shed are shelves on which various dairy
231 articles are stored. The man who brings the salt home is supposed to take it
778 straight to the cattle shed and place it on one of these shelves; he must not
783 bring it directly into his house, even though he will later have to do so when the ceremony is about to begin. It is felt that the salt would become polluted in the house if it were brought into an unpurified room where sexual activity has occurred. The cattle shed, though not considered a temple like the Toda dairy, is a pure and sacred place because milk is stored
783 there. When the salt is finally brought into each purified house for powder-
796 ing, it is whisked around the mortar with the help of a freshly cut twig of wild *'hubbe* (also used for loosening any salt that remains on the bottom
(824) of the basket). The Badagas have two kinds of broom, one for indoor use and one for outside; but both are considered impure because of what they have come in contact with, and so cannot be used for sweeping the salt
412 around while it is being powdered. The used part of the *'hubbe* branch is
(783) thrown away after this, and the unused remainder is placed on top of the salt. From the time of purchase onward, this salt is always carried in a special basket kept only for this purpose.

It is not only the salt that must be kept in a ritually pure state; the
783 man selected to perform the ceremony on behalf of each household is also under certain restrictions. From the day of the new moon until after the salt has been given to the cattle this man must not shave, have sexual relations, cut his finger or toe nails, or stay overnight anywhere other than in his own home. By observing all these prohibitions he is believed to build
(765) up a state of personal purity. (Were a man to cut his hair and shave, it would suggest he had recently attended a funeral and was still in the inauspicious state of mourning for a deceased relative.) The culmination of this spiritual preparation comes on the night preceding the ceremony, when he must sleep alone on a sack on the earthen floor, wearing cotton and without any other bedding.

(356) Early the following morning the house has to be purified too. After the